

## **INSPECTION SERVICES**

### **Fiscal Year 2013**

The goals of this department are accomplished through the enforcement of building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and fire protection codes for residential and commercial construction. This department receives applications for permits, reviews plans to ensure compliance with applicable codes, issues permits for construction, and performs inspections to confirm work is completed according to approved plans and in compliance with applicable codes.

This department issued a total of 2,792 permits this fiscal year. Total construction value for all permits issued by this department was \$115,368,412 which produced \$636,963.03 in department revenue.

This past year we've continued to see an increase in commercial construction activity with projects such as Amherst College Seligman Dorm renovation and addition, construction of a 5 story mixed use building on West Street, completion of the renovation and expansion of Atkins Farm, and construction of a new medical building on Research Drive.

Activity associated with restaurants in fiscal year 2013 included the new Glazed Doughnut Shop, El Comalito, Oriental Flavor and the expansion of Mission Cantina.

This department is also responsible for the periodic inspection and certification of certain buildings and structures. These include annual inspections of public and private schools, daycare facilities, residential apartment buildings, places of assembly and restaurants. There were 178 applications for inspections this year.

Enforcement of the Town's Zoning By-law is also a function of this department. Applications for permits are reviewed for compliance with all zoning provisions including allowable use and occupancy. Staff also performs investigations and responds to complaints to ensure that activities, including those other than construction, are not in violation of the By-law.

This year also marked the first full year of Code Enforcement with respect to residential rental properties. The Town recently hired a full time Code Enforcement Officer responsible for responding to complaints associated with rental properties, contacting and educating landlords and working with property owners to gain compliance with the Town's regulations. The Code Enforcement Officer is also an agent of the Board of Health and is charged with ensuring compliance with all codes and regulations pertaining to a safe and healthy living environment.

Inspection Services staff worked closely with the Safe and Healthy Neighborhood Working Group and assisted with the development of a new general bylaw to register and permit all residential rental properties. The new regulation was adopted by Town Meeting in spring of 2013 and Inspection Services has begun preparing for the new program's implementation in January 2014.